

Hobbies

You can't get a rise out of the South again

By Roger Boye

Today's column answers questions about paper money, an always popular collectible.

Q—We found identical Confederate States of America \$100 bills (copies enclosed) in an old book we bought at a flea market. Might they be of value? The paper has turned brown.

Y.P., Calumet City

A—They're worthless imitations because all three of your bills carry the same serial number while genuine specimens would sport different numbers. Over the years, forgers have created thousands of fake Confederate notes, often printed on crinkled, yellowed paper to look old.

Q—I think you're wrong to minimize the value of \$1 bills signed by Joseph Barr. You use a "so many million printed" argument that fails to account for the large number of bills that wore out in circulation and were destroyed.

S.G., Chicago

A—Joseph W. Barr was secretary of the Treasury for just one month at the end of Lyndon Johnson's administration, but the government distributed \$1 Federal Reserve notes with his signature (series 1963-B) for nearly 10 months. The evidence suggests

that his short tenure in office prompted many people to hoard "Barr notes," thinking they were extremely rare.

You're right that production totals don't necessarily indicate rarity. But Uncle Sam produced nearly 450 million bills with Barr's signature, and many of those apparently were salted away for posterity. In short, you'd be hard pressed to find a dealer willing to pay more than \$1 for a "Barr note" that shows even the slightest wear from use.

Q—During World War II, my husband acquired 50 pieces of paper money from the Philippines and Japan. Is such money

still legal tender?

H.G., Hoffman Estates

A—Most war-era currency from the Pacific theater has long since been demonetized. Many of the bill types are common among collectors, in part because U.S. troops brought Asian money with them when they returned to the United States.

Q—Is there any significance to the lucky number "7" that appears on so much of our currency?

B.C., Chicago

A—Uncle Sam issues paper money through the 12 Federal Reserve banks. "G" and "7" designate the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago—not good luck.

ond wife found Hartford listening to one of Darin's recordings. "Doesn't that make you feel a little uncomfortable?" he asked. Hartford's response was memorable. "The publicity," he said, "is sort of fun."